



WisDOT/City of Oshkosh
Wednesday, June 30, 2004, 1:30 p.m.

People in attendance

Jackson Kinney, City of Oshkosh Community Development
Walt Raith, East Central WI Regional Planning Commission
Scott Erickson, City of Oshkosh Public Works
Kristi Bales, City of Oshkosh Planning
Mark Huddleston, City of Oshkosh Transportation
David Patek, City of Oshkosh Public Works
Darryn Burich, City of Oshkosh Planning
Jenny Cavanaugh, WisDOT District 3
Doug Dalton, WisDOT BOP
Casey Newman, WisDOT BOP
Jonquil Johnston, WisDOT BOP
Susan Kepplinger, City of Oshkosh Planning
Richard Wollangk, Oshkosh City Manager

1. Overview of WisDOT's meeting purpose and WisDOT's long-range plan, *Connections 2030*, by WisDOT staff: The meeting began at 1:35 with introductions. Casey Newman, WisDOT, gave an overview of WisDOT's long-range plan *Connections 2030*. WisDOT is seeking input on transportation planning issues from larger Wisconsin cities at this point. *Connections 2030* is scheduled to be completed in 2006.
2. Gathering of input from City of Oshkosh: Staff from the City of Oshkosh displayed several maps relating to transportation, growth, and land use. They also provided copies of the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan from 1998, the draft transportation element of the City's state statute compliant comprehensive plan (under construction), their Comprehensive Plan map from 1993, and the Highway 41 Corridor Improvement Plan from 1997. Discussion focused on the following topics:
 - a. Current transportation and development issues in Oshkosh
The City of Oshkosh is developing a comprehensive plan. The plan's horizon is the year 2020 and is being developed to comply with Wisconsin's state statute. As such, the plan will delineate growth projections and land use changes in 5-year increments.

Oshkosh staff noted there is a need to realign U.S. Hwy 45 on Main Street near Pearl. Truck traffic routing on U.S. Hwy 41 is an issue. There was discussion regarding what types of routes should be connecting highways. Oshkosh staff noted cross state travel from the Oshkosh area to Interstates 39, 90, and 94 can be cumbersome, although U.S. Hwy 10 has reduced the traffic counts to some extent. They are also concerned about

truck traffic on STH 26. They don't believe the expansion to 4 lanes on USH 151 to Fond du Lac will relieve pressure on STH 26. (It wouldn't be expected to do much yet, as the project is not complete.) U.S. Hwy 41 will eventually be expanded. Traffic frequently backs up on the causeway, particularly during weekend travel. WisDOT staff noted this route has been designated a Major Highway Development project and approved for funding, but has not been funded. The city felt that 41 does not operate as a barrier or cause lack of local connection across its right-of-way. They did mention however, that the recent 100-year flood event cut-off hospitals from the main population base to the east through local streets and drivers had to come to the west-side hospitals in from the east off of STH 21.

The City noted that bridge planning and expansion is needed. The Wisconsin Street Bridge is currently being improved. The Jackson Street/Oregon Street Bridge needs maintenance.

The transit routes in Oshkosh are geared primarily for senior citizens. A new "on-demand" route is set to begin service soon. The transit stops are based at senior residential centers, medical facilities, and shopping centers. Regional bus service is available on a limited basis between Oshkosh and Neenah.

The railroad crossing at Broad Street is a concern for the surrounding neighborhood. Rail crossings in general are issues in the older neighborhoods in Oshkosh.

b. Future growth issues and related transportation needs

Oshkosh staff noted the local economy has experienced steady growth. Oshkosh Truck Corporation, a major area employer, has boomed due to U.S. Department of Defense contracts.

The City is planning to grow to the southwest, where plans call for expansion of the existing industrial/office park along STH 44 and new residential areas further out in that direction. The City of Oshkosh has a boundary agreement with the Town of Algoma. The agreement calls for the eventual phasing in over a 40-year period of "town islands" and "town peninsulas" that are surrounded by the City of Oshkosh. The City's comprehensive plan discusses the annexation of these parcels in general terms. Typically, the City addresses neighborhood planning with special area plans. As part of the boundary agreement, the City relinquished its extra-territorial review in the Town of Algoma along State Hwy 21.

In the City's estimation, it is unlikely fixed route transit service will be available in the peripheral areas in the near future. The City expressed a desire to improve coordination with private developers for transit service in new developments, particularly with new clinic sites, commercial centers, and schools.

The City staff noted park and ride lots are needed for commuters along the U.S. Hwy 41 corridor. The intersection of Hwy 41 and State Hwy 44 in the cities southwest corner and the north side area of Oshkosh in the 41 and 45 area were mentioned as possible locations.

Currently, there is no commercial passenger air service at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh. The City staff felt this was neither a detriment nor a benefit. The City does not expect passenger air service to be reinstated because of the close proximity to airports in Outagamie County and Milwaukee. Freight and cargo air service is available and is important to the local economy. There is an industrial park on the southeast side of the city near the airport, as well as businesses along 20th Avenue that benefit from air traffic.

The City is enthusiastic about opportunities for high-speed passenger rail service and a possible extension to Chicago. The City staff believes it would be an asset to the City of Oshkosh to host a rail station. The City is also concerned about the retention of Greyhound Bus stops in the region. The City noted that regional transit would be a nice addition to the regional transportation system and mentioned the possibility for including commuter rail along Hwy 41. The City staff expressed support for High Occupancy Vehicle lanes and other congestion management measures on Hwy 41. The City feels this is important because they want to prevent or at least prolong non-attainment area designation. City staff noted their support for a dedicated revenue source for transit.

The City supports the continuation of the Transportation Enhancement Program. The City plan calls for building bicycling/pedestrian trails, including trails adjacent to rail lines. The City stated the trails they have already built are popular in the community. The City would like to explore sources of funding for public water transportation. The city mentioned the need to better coordinate with surrounding towns on agreements for sidewalks.

The City would like to see transportation projects incorporate community sensitive design. The City is looking for WisDOT leadership to avoid the construction of new billboards along highways into the city. The city currently prohibits them however, not all of the adjacent towns or the county do at this time. The City would welcome transportation enhancement funds specifically for removing billboards.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.